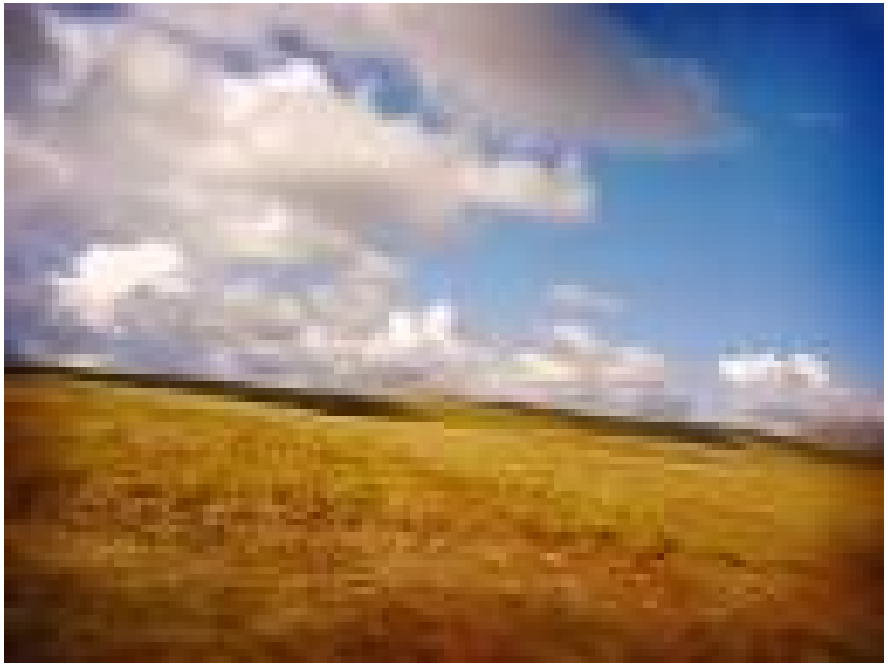
Severe Weather Awareness
Outlooks, Watches, and Warnings

- Each year severe weather lashes across the nation, interrupting normal activities, damaging property, and posing a threat to life. The effects of severe thunderstorms in east central Iowa, northeast Missouri, and northwest Illinois can be particularly devastating.

How do you know what to expect from the rapidly changing Midwestern weather?

Every morning the NOAA's Severe Weather Service Weather Forecast Office issues a product called the **Hazardous Weather Outlook**. In the outlook, the forecaster outlines any significant weather expected in the next 24 hours or so. Although it is designed for use by law enforcement, spotter groups, emergency managers, schools, and other officials, the Hazardous Weather Outlook can be helpful to anyone when they are trying to plan their day. We also update the outlook at unscheduled times whenever conditions change from what was expected. You can read the outlook on our web site http://www.crh.noaa.gov/product.php?site=dvn&product=hwo&issuedby=dvn&glossary=1 or hear it on your **NOAA Weather Radio**.

Do you know what it means when you are under a severe weather watch?



- A **WATCH** is issued to give advance notice when conditions are favorable for the development of severe weather, whether it be severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, or flash flooding. When a watch is issued for your area, it is time to ***take precautions*** and ***make sure you are prepared*** should bad weather strike. Make sure you have a flashlight, radio, and weather radio with fresh batteries handy in case you lose power. Monitor weather radio closely for the latest statements or warnings. It is also a good time to move vehicles and animals to shelter and secure loose outdoor articles.

Do you know what it means when you are under a severe weather warning?

- **WARNINGS** are issued when severe weather is occurring or imminent. When a warning is issued for your area, you should ***take action immediately*** to protect your life and your property.

So what is the most important thing to understand about outlooks, watches, and warnings?

- the **Hazardous Weather Outlook** gives you the overview of what's expected for the next 24 hours.
- a **WATCH** means you should be ready to take action,
- and a **WARNING** means the situation is life-threatening and you should take action immediately.

Please remember... the best safety tip of all is to be prepared ahe